

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 01517 100847Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 H-02 ORM-02 DHA-02 SAM-01 IO-11

/036 W

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P 100757Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIRITY 6290

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJ: REFUGEES FROM THE CAPE VERDE ISLANDS

REF: STATE 054726

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. ASSERTIONS MADE BY SEN. KENNEDY'S
CONSTITUTENTS OF GOP DISCRIMINATION AGAINST CAPE
VERDEAN "REFUGEES" ARE UNFOUNDED. IN FACT, GOP HANDLING OF
CAPE VERDIAN INTERESTS APPEARS TO BE GENEROUS GIVEN THE HIGHLY
DEPRESSED STATED OF PORTUGUESE ECONOMY. END SUMMARY

2. STATISTICS: WHILE NO PRECISE STATISTICS ARE AVAILABLE FROM
ANY SOURCE, FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS COMPLIED AFTER CONSULTA-
TIONS WITH CAPE VERDIANS RESIDING LOCALLY, CAPE VERDIAN
EMBASSY, MINISTRY OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION, AND SECRETARY OF
STATE FOR REFUGEES. CAPE VERDIANS IN PORTUGAL FALL INTO FOUR
DIFFERENT CATEGORIES: RESIDENTS PRIOR TO PARIL 25; CIVIL SERVICE
ANGOLAN RETURNEES; NON-CIVIL SERVICE RETURNEES; AND POLITICAL
REFUGEES FROM CAPE VERDE ITSELF.

-- LOCAL RESIDENTS-- CAPE VERDIANS RESIDING IN PORTUGAL
CURRENTLY NUMBER ABOUT 15,000. OF THIS NUMBER,
ABOUR 12,000, OR 80 PERCENT, WERE LOCAL RESIDENTS
PRIOR TO APRIL 25, 1974. ALL OF THESE
RESIDENTS ENJOYED THE FULL RIGHTS OF PORTUGUESE CITIZEN-
SHIP PRIOR TO THE REVOLUTION, INCLUDING UNEMPLOYMENT AND OTHER
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SUCH SOCIAL BENEFITS AS MAY EXIST, AND HAVE CONTINUED TO DO SO.

THERE IS NO QUESTION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THIS SEGMENT ON THE PART OF THE GOP.

-- ANGOLAN RETURNEES -- AFTER CAPE VERDIAN INDEPENDENCE, ABOUT 8,000 CAPE VERDIANS WORKING IN ANGOLA FLED THE CIVIL WAR ALONG WITH THE LARGE MASS OF PORTUGUESE BORN SETTLERS. 5,000 OF THESE WENT BACK TO CAPE VERDE, 3,000 CHOSE TO RETURN TO PORTUGAL. THE LARGE PART OF THE LATTER GROUP, CERTAINLY WELL OVER TWO THIRDS, WERE PUBLIC SERVANTS IN THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT. AS SUCH, THEY ARE ENTITLED TO, AND ARE RECEIVING, SUCH BENEFITS AS ALL FORMER PORTUGUESE CIVIL SERVANTS IN ANGOLA HAVE BEEN GRANTED. WITH THIS GROUP THERE IS AGAIN NO CASE OF DISCRIMINATION.

-- NON-PUBLIC SERVANTS -- OF THE CAPE VERDIANS WHO RETURNED FROM ANGOLA LESS THAN 1,000 DID NOT FALL INTO THE CIVIL SERVICE CATEGORY. THE GOP HAS OFFERED TO TRANSPORT THESE INDIVIDUALS TO CAPE VERDE OR TO ALLOW THEM TO TAKE PORTUGUESE CITIZENSHIP. THEY CHOSE, HOWEVER, TO REMAIN IN PORTUGAL AS RESIDENT ALIENS. THE GOP, THEREFORE, IS NOT PROVIDING REFUGEE RELIEF FOR THESE INDIVIDUALS, REASONING THAT THEY ARE CAPE VERDEAN CITIZENS AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THEIR OWN COUNTRY. GOP TREATMENT OF THIS GROUP SEEMS MORE A REASONABLE CONCESSION TO REALITY.

-- POLITICAL REFUGEES -- THE ONLY TRUE REFUGEES DIRECTLY FROM CAPE VERDE CONSIST OF A GROUP OF ABOUT 350 INDIVIDUALS NOW LIVING IN PORTUGAL WHO WOULD NOT OR COULD NOT LIVE UNDER THE P.A.I.G.C. REGIME, WHETHER FOR POLITICAL OR OTHER REASONS. NO INFORMATION ON THEM IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE BUT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS PROMISED A REPORT ON THEIR STATUS.

3. CONCLUSION: THE FACTS INDICATE THAT THE GOP DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE AGAINST CAPE VERDEANS RESIDING IN PORTUGAL; IN FACT, QUITE THE OPPOSITE IS THE CASE. IN MARCH 7 CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFFS, CAPE VERDIAN CONSUL JOSE DE CRUZ INDICATED NOT ONLY SATISFACTION WITH GOP TREATMENT OF ITS CITIZENS, BUT GRATITUDE FOR THE GOP'S DECISION TO SUSTAIN - AT HIGH COST TO ITSELF - SEVERAL THOUSAND INDIVIDUALS WHO WOULD BE A HEAVY ECONOMIC BURDEN TO CAPE VERDE WERE THEY TO RETURN TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY. CARLUCCI

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISCRIMINATION, REFUGEES, US CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LISBON01517
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760090-0518
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760376/aaaacpbj.tel
Line Count: 107
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 54726
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <31 AUG 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REFUGEES FROM THE CAPE VERDE ISLANDS
TAGS: SREF, PO, US, (KENNEDY, EDWARD M)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006